

**Violence Against Women Act Advisory Committee and
Crime Commission Grant Review Committee Meeting
April 5, 2006**

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Advisory Committee and the Crime Commission Grant Review Committee of the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice met Wednesday, April 5, 2006, at 9:30 a.m., in Lower Level Conference Room A of the Nebraska State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska. Notice of this meeting was published March 25, 2006 in the Lincoln Journal Star.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:40 a.m. by Nancy Steeves, Grants Division Chief of the Nebraska Crime Commission.

Roll Call

Members present: Debora Brownyard, Bill Burgess, Capt. Joy Citta, Tonya Folk, Carl Hart, Phyllis Heidzig, Tom Hunter, John Lehotyak, Paulett Merrell, Sarah O'Shea, Peter Pirsch, Judy Priess, James Riskowski (arrived 9:55), Steve Rowoldt (sitting in for Ellen Brokofsky), and Col. Bryan Tuma (arrived 10:20). **Members excused:** Shawn Eatherton, Brenda Urbanek, and Chief Thomas Warren. **Members absent:** Scott Arnold, Hon. Jon Bruning, Judi gaiashkibos, Joe Jeanette, Gary Lacey, and Lance Webster. **Staff present:** Michael Behm, Deb Hunter, Jennifer Kirkpatrick, Nancy Steeves, and Stephanie Vensky. Self-introductions were made.

Introductions

Kirkpatrick made the group aware of the grant review process. She stated once the applications are received there are individuals who agree to serve on the staff/grant review committee and review the grants, provide comments and recommendations. Staff Review Committee included members of the Domestic Violence Coalition, Attorney General's Office, NCVC, and the Omaha Victim/Witness Unit.

Presentation to Sarah O'Shea

Behm announced Sarah O'Shea will be retiring from the Domestic Violence Coalition. On behalf of the Crime Commission, Behm presented O'Shea with a recognition award for all her years of service to the Domestic Violence Coalition and the Crime Commission.

2006-2008 State Plan

Kirkpatrick stated a draft copy of the state plan was sent to everyone in their packets. She said the plan is a federal requirement for the state to receive VAWA dollars. The dollars received will be based on the information in the state plan. Community meetings were held statewide to get ideas of the different Gaps, Needs & possible Solutions and based upon that information the main focus is to improve the criminal justice response to domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

Kirkpatrick gave an overview of the State Plan and opened the floor for discussion or questions. She noted the draft would then be presented to the Crime Commission at the May 5th meeting.

Motion

A motion was made by Citta and seconded by Burgess to accept the 2006-2008 VAWA State Implementation Plan. Voting in favor of the motion: Rowoldt, Brownyard, Burgess, Citta, Folk, Hart, Heidzig, Hunter, Lehotyak, Merrell, O'Shea, Pirsch, Priess, and Riskowski. (Motion Carried).

Review and Discussion on 2005 VAWA Grant Applications

Kirkpatrick stated the federal award was down \$9,000 from last year, however there was a one time turn back of funds of \$80,000, which made for \$1,067,300 to be awarded. She said the Office of Violence Against Women will be making major changes next year as to how VAWA funds will be awarded. One change will lower the amount available for overall victim services from 30% to 20% and the remaining 10% will go directly to cultural community centers to underserved victims. Another change is programs will not be able to request funds under other categories (law enforcement, probation, or prosecution) without a direct contract. The Office of Violence Against Women will be providing Kirkpatrick with more information on these changes once there are clear guidelines.

Kirkpatrick stated this was a major focus of the staff review along with consideration of sustainability and best use of funds to meet the priorities. She opened the floor for discussion or questions.

Kirkpatrick pointed out there were some additions added to the Special Conditions form due to the VAWA guidelines changing. The additions will apply to all programs and contracting agencies. The first addition is Activities that May Compromise Victim Safety, which were taken directly from the federal guidelines and states what is and is not allowable. The next addition is Suspension or Termination of Funding per Federal and State Regulations, which states these funds must be used for activities to promote victims safety. The last addition is Parties of Contracted Services Paid by VAWA funds, which basically states if an agency is contracting with a program that receives VAWA funds that agency is also responsible for following all of the Special Conditions set forth by the federal guidelines, therefore those agencies must also sign and date the Special Conditions. An example of these additions was provided to the group.

The committees agreed to first review and discuss each grant individually and then make funding recommendations. Kirkpatrick provided a brief review of each grant and directed attention to the Summary Comment Sheets that included all the comments and recommendations of the Staff Review Committee.

The group began their review with grant **#05-VW-707**, Human Services - Alliance. It was questioned whether they are an eligible applicant. The applicant did not meet the requirements and guidelines identified in the VAWA State Plan. The grant lacks completeness, clarity, continuity and consistency. The proposed program lacks the ability to address the identified problem. The resources available are not fully identified and did not include an explanation of how they would coordinate with the existing programs. The applicant did not show cost effectiveness of the project. There were not sufficient funds available to consider funding a new program.

The group reviewed grant #05-VW-714, Bright Horizons - Norfolk. Overall the program lacks the ability to address identified problem. As per the Crime Commission grant application guidelines to fund an enhanced advocate position, the position must be part of a Coordinated Response Team. The enhanced advocacy position must provide immediate on-scene advocacy or advocacy at some other secure site, within 24 hours of the arrest or incident. Funding is not to be used to provide regular advocacy. The applicant did not show how this position is part of the Coordinated Response Team. The Coordinated Response Team is defined as a group of local representatives from law enforcement, prosecution, probation and victim service agencies who work together in a coordinated manner to improve the criminal justice system's overall response to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Active participation is required by prosecution, law enforcement, probation and victim service agencies. Active participation is shown by regular attendance to CRT meetings and signed Memorandums of Commitment from each key agency. There were no signed Memorandums of Commitment submitted by key criminal justice agencies. The grant application request does not meet definitions and requirements of a Coordinated Response Team and Enhance Advocacy. The grant application states a signed Memorandum of Commitment is required from each agency actively participating in the CRT and there were none provided. Overall the grant does not meet the federal requirements, the focus of the state plan focus of a coordinated response team. Applicant does not show how they will coordinate with existing resources. There were not sufficient funds available at this time to consider funding for a new program. It was strongly recommended Bright Horizons contact the VAWA Team with the Attorney General's Office for assistance in developing a Coordinated Response Efforts in the area.

Riskowski stepped out 10:30

Tara Muir gave a brief explanation of the VAWA Team. This is a VAWA Coordinating Team out of the Attorney General's Office and is funded by the Grants to Encourage Arrest funds with the Office of Violence Against Women. Charles Venditte is the lead coordinator to supervise the CRT's across the state. She said this was developed to get CRT's additional training, technical assistance, etc.

Kirkpatrick added the VAWA Team held their first training in Chadron and had great participation from all the criminal justice agencies in the area.

Motion

A motion was made by Burgess and seconded by Lehotyak to accept the recommendations of the Staff Review Committee to deny grant #707 Human Services-Alliance and grant #714 Bright Horizons-Norfolk. Voting in favor of the motion: Rowoldt, Brownyard, Burgess, Citta, Folk, Heidzig, Hunter, Lehotyak, Merrell, O'Shea, Pirsch, Priess, and Tuma. (Motion Carried).

The group reviewed grant #05-VAWA-700, CDVIP – North Platte. There was a question on the Sandhills domestic violence project person, should this be a personnel person or should this be contracted out? Did not fully clarify the request for a Domestic Violence Prosecutor and how this position works with the victims. Is the position providing victim centered services that does not compromise victim safety? Law Enforcement Training and Regional Multi Disciplinary Training was requested but not recommended for funding. It was recommended they utilize and collaborate with the VAWA Team.

Good to see the Violence Against Women Act Advisory Committee Batterers Intervention Program is highly recognized in the area and statistics show an increase in enrollment in the program. Good letters of support and memorandums of commitment from all the current CRT members.

Discussion was held on grant **#05-VAWA-701**, Lancaster Co. Justice Council – Lincoln. Requested a 7% increase in pay for each position. BIP Coordinator position not explained if it is a new or existing position. Request for training is not justified and the need for training is not explained in the narrative or throughout the grant. Problem statement needs to be focused down. Need to provide more information on the statistics. Good information regarding evidence based prosecution. Goals/Objectives need some work as to updating information. Good letters of support and all Memorandums of Commitment were submitted.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-702**, Project Response – Auburn. They were asked to submit the Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Good Executive summary. Good problem statement. Showed good evidence based prosecution being utilized. Their goal is well worded. Excellent letters of support.

The group discussed grant **#05-VW-703**, Crisis Center for DA/SA – Fremont. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Need more explanation for the increase for the Intervention Advocate. Need more explanation for Travel request to consortium meetings as to how this was paid for last year and how do these meeting pertain to the job. Encourage them to make staffing positions a funding priority. Focus problem statement and provide the detail in the description of the problem. Advocacy provided because of victim referral by law enforcement is not broken down by face to face and phone contact. It was questioned why there is no Memorandum of Commitment from the Sheriff's Office. Would like to see more letters of support from community agencies that work with the program, but do not directly participate in the coordinated response team.

Riskowski returned at 11:00

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-704**, Douglas Co. DV Coordinated Response – Omaha. Need to identify what kind of key stakeholders collaborate with the program and what other unique community identifiers does this area have? Breakdown pages of the budget were not included. Personnel section does not explain match funds. Consultants/Contracts need explanation for increase. Fringe benefits are not broken-down or well explained. Encourage program to have specialized positions a funding priority. Problem description is very broad and need to specify what gaps and needs will be concentrated on. Good explanation of their process and who is responsible for what. Limited Memorandums of Commitment and no letters of support.

Citta would like to see the letters of support from those other rural areas contingent to them receiving their award.

The group discussed grant **#05-VW-705**, Nebraska State Patrol – Lincoln. This position was a six month request. Budget is not calculated correctly. Consultants/Contract need to meet the state guidelines. Encourage program to make DV/SA Program Manager a funding priority. Travel request not recommended for funding because this position will be

working with the VAWA Team and there is money in that grant for travel. Would like to see more statistics on training held throughout the state. Thorough information provided of the project operation. Good activities and timetable. Good letters of support. Continuation Information provided good explanation of the problems experienced in filling this position.

The group discussed grant **#05-VW-706**, NE Attorney General's Office – Lincoln. Do not include cover pages. Did not provide sustainability plan or steps that are currently being taken to enhance support of the program. Need a breakdown of the 41% fringe benefits in Personnel. Consultants/Contracts needs more explanation and justification. Request for out of state training needs more explanation and what will the training assist with. Need budget narratives for supplies/operating and explanation of the \$525 and \$150 request. Annual Professional dues cannot be paid with VAWA funds. Problem statement needs to be focused down and get to the main point. Good explanation of transition into a new position.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-708**, Center for SA/DV Survivors – Columbus. Applicant needs to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Good to see program is enhancing with SANE nurses being part of the coordinated response. Overall the grant was well written. Personnel budget shows an increase in request for the bilingual advocate and fringe benefits, but needs explanation. Clarification on the volunteer time in match can only use minimum wage which is \$5.15. Asked for clarification under Consultants/Contracts and the request for an on-call. Their statistics shows they have good response and good referrals. Good explanation on sexual assault investigations/reporting. Good Memorandums of Commitment that show the support of the communities.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-709**, Heartland Family Service – Bellevue. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Budget summary and required forms are signed by two different individuals, there needs to be one authorized official. Budget not calculated correctly, need more information in Personnel for the increase and fringe benefits. Requested for a Domestic Violence Advocate to be placed at the County Attorney's Office needs more information and justification for the need of the position. Need some corrections in Travel on the reimbursement rates. Need clarification on their statistics of domestic violence victims served. Policies and procedures have all been recently updated. Questioned is this program is currently utilizing VINE.

Discussion was held on providing training and standardize the statistical aspect of the grant.

The group broke to distribute lunch at 11:30.

Pirsch left the meeting at 11:50.

Riskowski left the meeting at 12:00.

The group discussed grant **#05-VW-710**, Spouse Abuse Sexual Assault Crisis Center – Hastings. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Well explained budget narratives in Personnel. Encourage program to make staffing positions a funding priority. Good problem statement. It was questioned why there is not training provided for prosecution or probation if they are part of the CRT. Why are the policies and procedures not being regularly reviewed? Good Memorandums of Commitment and Letters

of support show collaboration with Nuckolls County and Superior. Program has had difficulty submitting the required reports on a timely basis.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-711**, Crisis Center – Grand Island. Sustainability planning is not well explained. Questioned why the community description only provides 90% of the total population and not 100%. Personnel budget needs more explanation if there is more than one advocate on call at a time. Volunteers used as match can only use minimum wage of \$5.15. Request for Spanish Speaking Communication's Dispatcher is not well explained or justified and how will the dispatcher only work with domestic violence or sexual assault call? It was questioned why there is no match provided from the law enforcement communication center. There was a question in the statistics on the kind of calls being received. No justification for the 911 dispatcher or how this was a solution. Activities and timetable did not address hiring for the 911 dispatcher nor does it address training for prosecution, which they said was a problem. Only one objective provided and it does not address all the issues or problems identified in the grant. Good Memorandums of Commitment, but no letters of support from other neighboring agencies.

The group pointed out the grant states that the CRT is assisting the County Attorney in developing a diversion program. This type of activity is not allowable with VAWA funds because it is considered to compromise victim safety as per the federal guidelines. Kirkpatrick said this would be noted on their summary comment sheet.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-712**, Haven House – Wayne. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Need to clarify in match for fringe benefits. Good problem statement and good explanation of the needs in the area. Activities and timetable was very thorough. They identified goals and objective that fit well with the identified problem. Good Memorandums of Commitment and letters of support. They show the collaboration and support in the area.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-713**, The S.A.F.E. Center – Kearney. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Consultants request for a one hour training was not considered cost effective and suggested they collaborate with the VAWA Team. Supplies/operating request for \$800 for technical assistance with law enforcement computer system queries was not considered a focus area for these funds and the law enforcement agency is not providing match. Good problem statement and explanation of statistical discrepancies. It was questioned the reason for the police department's sporadic attendance and is strongly recommended this program collaborate with the VAWA Team. Good Memorandums of Commitment and letters of support to show support and collaboration in the area.

The group reviewed grant **#05-VW-715**, Nebraska Office of Probation Admin. – Lincoln. This is a new applicant. This position would design policies and procedures to monitor people on probation thru Intimate Partner Domestic Violence, which would be an assessment tool to be sure the probation guidelines are affective for the type of offender. They will also provide training to all probation officers. Kirkpatrick said they still needed clarification in some areas of the grant, but until they actually have someone in the position to generate ideas it is hard to be specific in those areas.

The group discussed grant **#05-VW-716**, Parent-Child Center – Lexington. Need to submit a Criminal Justice Domestic Violence Improvement Plan. Kirkpatrick stated this program has a new director and this was their first time writing a grant. It was recommended they contact the grant administrator for technical assistance in rewriting the grant to include the CRT piece and also suggested they work with the VAWA Team. Supplies/operating request for computer supplies and maintenance not recommended because this is not a main focus of the funds. The problem statement and project operation sections need to be revised to include the valid information needed. The identified goal only covers domestic violence victims and no mention of sexual assault victims. No Memorandum of Commitment from Probation, which was listed as one of the key stakeholders. No letters of support from other agencies identified to have working agreements with the program, such as Medical agencies, Health & Human Services, Churches, etc. Needs to provide information as to why required reports were not submitted on a timely basis.

Brownyard questioned the statistics provided for prosecution.

Burgess asked if law enforcement was receiving all the 25% required by VAWA. Kirkpatrick said no new law enforcement positions were funded just an increase for existing positions. She said it was also suggested they utilize the VAWA Team for training for a different source of funding.

Motion

A motion was made by Burgess and seconded by Hunter accept the recommendations of the Staff Review Committee to approve all the remaining grants. Voting in favor of the motion: Brownyard (abstain #715), Burgess, Citta (abstain #701), Folk (abstain #700), Hart (abstain #708), Heidzig (abstain #702), Hunter, Lehotyak (abstain #704), Merrell (abstain #706), O'Shea, Priess (abstain #710), Rowoldt (abstain #701, #715), Tuma (abstain #705). (Motion carried).

Following are the Grant Review Committee's recommendations for award or denial of 2005 VAWA grants. Total amount recommended for award is \$1,067,300.

2005 VAWA Grant Applicants / Recommendations

Number	Agency/Title/Previous Award	Amount Requested	Staff Review Recommend	Grant Review Recommend
05-VW-700	CDVIP-No. Platte (Community Domestic Violence Intervention Program (\$79,200)	\$120,753	\$80,200	\$80,200
05-VW-701	Lancaster Co. Justice Council-Lincoln (A Coordinated Response to Reducing DV) (\$202,723)	\$216,578	\$214,557	\$214,557
05-VW-702	Project Response-Auburn (Public Information Coordination Project) (\$30,437)	\$32,028	\$32,028	\$32,028

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05-VW-703	Crisis Ctr. for DA/SA-Fremont (Coordinated Response: Intervention Advocate) (\$31,693)	\$44,213	\$42,930	\$42,930
05-VW-704	DVCC-Omaha (Douglas Co. Domestic Violence Coordinated Response) (\$230,000)	\$272,743	\$243,748	\$243,748
05-VW-705	NE State Patrol-Lincoln (Nebraska DV/SA Program V) (\$50,000)	\$32,280	\$19,750	\$19,750
05-VW-706	Attorney General's Office- Lincoln (Prosecutorial Response to Domestic & Sexual Violence) (\$67,000)	\$59,312	\$47,890	\$47,890
05-VW-707	Human Services-Alliance (Domestic & Sexual Abuse Track) (\$0)	\$75,038	DENY	DENY
05-VW-708	Ctr. for SA/DV Survivors- Columbus (Coordinated Response System for DV, SA & Stalking) (\$45,000)	\$50,264	\$47,159	\$47,159
05-VW-709	Heartland Family Service- Bellevue (Sarpy Co. Coordinated Response Team) (\$88,500)	\$127,837	\$92,420	\$92,420
05-VW-710	SASA Crisis Center-Hastings (SASA Criminal Justice Response Effort) (\$43,000)	\$50,738	\$50,738	\$50,738
05-VW-711	Crisis Center-Grand Island (Coordinated Community Response Team) (\$23,457)	\$49,923	\$24,457	\$24,457
05-VW-712	Haven House-Wayne (Enhancement of Dakota County CRT) (\$55,000)	\$57,637	\$57,637	\$57,637
05-VW-713	The S.A.F.E. Center-Kearney (Five County Coordinated Community Response) (\$29,421)	\$33,417	\$30,421	\$30,421
05-VW-714	Bright Horizons-Norfolk (Domestic & Sexual Violence Victim Assistance Program) (\$0)	\$47,452	DENY	DENY
05-VW-715	NE Office of Probation Admin.- Lincoln (State Office of Probation Admin. Domestic Violence Initiative) (\$0)	\$53,365	\$53,365	\$53,365

05-VW-716	Parent-Child Center-Lexington (Community Response for Dawson & Gosper Counties) (\$29,000)	\$31,760	\$30,000	\$30,000
	TOTALS	\$1,369,800	\$1,067,300	\$1,067,300

Total 2005 Funds Available to Award -- \$1,067,300*

**** Please Note: This is \$9,000 less than last year. The amount requested is \$302,500 more than funds available.***

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephanie Vensky
Staff Assistant